



# Regional Center for Poison Control and Prevention

*Serving Massachusetts and Rhode Island*



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## Ipecac Syrup Alert

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The American Academy of Pediatrics announced its new policy on Poison Treatment in the Home at its annual meeting in New Orleans in November 2003. The AAP **no longer recommends ipecac in the home** as a treatment intervention.

### The AAP recommends:

- Syrup of ipecac should no longer be used as a poison treatment.
- Pediatricians and other health care professionals should advise parents to safely dispose of the ipecac currently in their homes.
- Current research does **NOT** support the routine administration of activated charcoal in the home.
- Poison prevention should continue in the home and any childcare setting.
- The first step for any suspected poisoning...call your local Poison Control Center at 1-800-222-1222.

### ➤ Why is Ipecac Syrup no longer recommended?

- The effectiveness of ipecac syrup had never been proven
- Ipecac does not completely remove poison from the stomach
- It creates a false sense of security and is often misused and given without the advice of a health care professional
- Ipecac can do more harm than good – creating adverse effects including persistent vomiting, lethargy, and diarrhea – which can interfere with diagnosis and treatment in the hospital

### ➤ What should I do with the Ipecac Syrup I have in my home?

- Dispose of it in a safe way, such as flushing it down the toilet or sink

### ➤ Should I use activated charcoal instead?

- **DO NOT** use activated charcoal in the home. Research does not support the routine administration of activated charcoal in the home yet, as efficacy and safety have not yet been demonstrated.

**If you suspect a poisoning, don't wait to see what happens, and don't try to treat it yourself. Call your poison control center right away.**

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**24-HOUR POISON HOTLINE 1-800-222-1222**